BOOK REVIEWS

James O. Menzoían, MD, Book Review Section Editor

Vascular access for hemodialysis, VII

M. L. Henry; Chicago; 2001; Bonus Books; 362 pages; $69.95.

This hardcover book is the seventh book in a series that deals with different aspects of hemodialysis access and offers a great deal of information that was presented in a day-and-a-half meeting devoted exclusively to issues associated with dialysis access.

The contributors of this book are from all fields that deal with end-stage renal disease, including general and vascular surgery, transplantation, interventional radiology, and nephrology, with different ranges of experiences and practices.

Each of the seven sections in this book is followed by a series of questions addressed by discussants with the response of the author about practical aspects in managing dialysis access. I found this part of the book very provocative, practical, and extremely helpful to the practicing physician; it gives you the impression that you are listening to a live discussion of a scientific paper at a national conference.

Each of the 32 chapters in this book contains a brief, easily understood presentation by an author regarding his respective field, followed by a list of references. Several chapters contain descriptions of the standard arteriovenous fistulae, grafts, dialysis access catheters, and some of the new modalities that are not often seen in the standard textbooks of vascular surgery, transplantation, or nephrology, with frank discussion about their outcome and how to deal with the complications, as well as some new, minimally invasive methods to create arteriovenous fistulae and appropriate pictures and drawings.

I found the chapter that addresses the CPT and ICD-9 coding for dialysis access extremely practical and a good resource for the average practitioner to use in his or her practice.

The controversies about favoring one kind of access over the other was presented fairly and honestly by appropriate subspecialists in the field, which makes the book very appealing to all the specialties that have to deal with end-stage renal disease; therefore, I find the book to be intended for use by practitioners in the fields of general and vascular surgery, transplantation, interventional radiology, and nephrology, including their residents and nurse practitioners.

Its price of $69.95 is attractive and makes it a good buy. At the same time, the small size of the book makes it practical to use but not small enough to carry in the white coat pocket.

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Angiogenesis: From the molecular to integrative pharmacology

M. E. Maragoudakis; 2000; Kluwer; 382 pages; $95.00.

This text contains the proceedings from the "Fifth Biannual Meeting on Angiogenesis: From the Molecular to Integrative Pharmacology," held July 1 through 7, 1999, on the island of Crete, Greece. Angiogenesis is an area of enormous current research activity, spanning basic science to the clinic, and involving a broad spectrum of scientists from academia and industry. The speed of new discovery in this field has been astounding, with new signaling pathways and modulators being identified monthly. Both the suppression of angiogenesis (cancer, proliferative retinopathy, arthritis, etc) and the enhancement of angiogenesis (ischemic cardiovascular diseases, wound healing) have become targets of drug development with numerous clinical trials under way. Clinicians in these arenas, including vascular surgeons, cardiologists, and interventionalists, require a basic understanding of the state of this field and are increasingly queried by their patients who have anecdotal information from the lay press.

That being said, this volume is primarily directed at the angiogenesis research community. The international group of contributors is composed of basic researchers from both university and biotechnology settings. As a summary of the proceedings of an international symposium, the monograph provides a general update on areas of research that is most useful to those actively engaged in basic or translational investigations. The book is loosely organized into seven sections: angiogenic cytokines, signal transduction mechanisms, matrix interactions, inhibitors of angiogenesis, angiogenesis in neoplasia, preclinical development of angiogenesis inhibitors, and clinical applications in ischemia. The individual chapters are narrowly focused overviews of a specific area in basic angiogenesis research. There is no attempt made at providing a broad background summary for those who are not knowledgeable in this field. The chapters are somewhat uneven in style and length, perhaps reflecting the nature of a multinational authorship. Perhaps the most relevant chapter for those interested in peripheral vascular disease is "Therapeutic Angiogenesis for Ischemic Heart Disease," in which the basic science, preclinical studies, and the phase I/II clinical trials of angiogenic therapy for coronary artery disease are nicely summarized. Unfortunately, the peripheral vascular trials, which have been far less numerous, are omitted.

As a practicing vascular surgeon with a basic science interest that does not involve angiogenesis per se, I found this text too specialized and of limited utility. It did not provide the type of broad background information in a format that was easily digestible to the uninitiated. I suspect that most vascular clinicians and even clinician-scientists who are not intimately familiar with the field of angiogenesis will also find it lacking in this regard. On the other hand, the monograph is a potentially useful update to the growing number of scientists who are actively engaged in basic or clinical research in angiogenesis.

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Metabolic diseases and diabetic complications

F. Crepaldi, A. Triengo, S. DelPrato; 1999; Elsevier Science; 276 pages; $139.50.

This monograph represents a compilation of lectures given at the Seventh European Symposium on Metabolism in October 1998. As the title suggests, emphasis is placed on type II diabetes and the insulin resistance syndrome, or so-called Syndrome X, and the associated metabolic alterations that cause a characteristic predisposition for accelerated atherosclerosis. With an increasing awareness and incidence of these disease entities, the book should certainly be useful to anyone with a scientific or clinical interest in diabetes, and many of the chapters provide useful summaries of current research in the field. Although a wide variety of complicated topics are covered, readers will appreciate the succinct chapters (average 4 pages), which, for the most part, are easy to read and understand. However, as would be expected from a textbook compiled from a symposium focused on specific published research topics, many of the chapters are written almost verbatim from the original reports, and as such, the book more closely resembles a "mega-journal" rather than a textbook.